

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TOKYO 16036 060659Z

ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0977

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 16036

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEES

REF: (A) STATE 215855 (B) TOKYO 95653 (C) TOKYO 07943

(D) TOKYO 05857

1. IN ADDITION TO SOME 1600 (INCLUDING IPP-77 AND IPP-78) INDOCHINESE REFUGEES RESETTLED FROM TEMPORARY HAVEN IN JAPAN IN THE U.S. UNDER ATTORNEY GENERAL'S PAROLE AUTHORITY, THERE ARE NOW 441 INDOCHINESE BOAT REFUGEES TEMPORARILY IN JAPAN. OF THESE, 17 HAVE BEEN FOUND ELIGIBLE AND PROCESSED TO POINT WHERE THEY ARE READY FOR FINAL INTERVIEW BY INS INSPECTOR PRIOR TO ICEM TICKETING (WHICH IS AWAITING USG APPROPRIATION).

2. AS REPORTED TO DEPARTMENT MAY 2 (REF C), GOJ ISSUED CABINET DECISION ON APRIL 28 ACCORDING TO WHICH A SELECTED NUMBER OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES MEETING SPECIFIC CRITERIA (REF B) WOULD BE ADMITTED TO JAPAN FOR PERMANENT SETTLEMENT. IN DISCUSSING THIS CABINET DECISION, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF JUSTICE DEPARTMENT'S IMMIGRATION BUREAU (AS WELL AS OTHER RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS IN MOFA) CAUTIONED THAT GOJ ENVISAGED QUALIFYING ONLY "SMALL NUMBER" OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES FOR PERMANENT SETTLEMENT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 TOKYO 16036 060659Z

IN JAPAN. GOJ OFFICIALS OFFERED FAMILIAR RATIONALE FOR THEIR STANCE, I.E., THAT JAPAN WAS "A HOMOGENEOUS SOCIETY" EXTREMELY DIFFICULT FOR FOREIGNERS TO PENETRATE; JAPAN DID NOT HAVE A HISTORY OF IMMIGRATION AND WITH IT POSSIBILITIES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT AND ASSIMILATION. OFFICIALS APPEAR GENUINELY TO BELIEVE THAT PERMITTING INDOCHINESE REFUGEES TO SETTLE PERMANENTLY IN JAPAN IN ANY APPRE-

CIABLE NUMBERS WOULD NOT BE DOING THEM A FAVOR BUT RATHER WOULD RELEGATE THEM TO THE LOWEST STRATA OF JAPANESE SOCIETY. AS RESULT, THE JAPANESE THUS FAR HAVE ACCEPTED FOR PERMANENT SETTLEMENT ONLY ONE THREE-MEMBER VIETNAMESE FAMILY UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE RECENT CABINET ORDER. EMBASSY HOPES OTHERS WILL BE QUALIFIED IN DUE COURSE.

3. AS HAS ALSO BEEN REPORTED TO DEPARTMENT (REF.B),GOJ HAS ADOPTED PROCEDURE REQUIRING GOVERNMENT OF REGISTRY OF ANY VESSEL SEEKING TO DEBARK INDOCHINESE REFUGEES FORMALLY TO UNDERTAKE THROUGH ITS EMBASSY IN TOKYO A COMMITMENT TO SETTLE ANY REFUGEE THUS ADMITTED TO JAPAN FOR TEMPORARY HAVEN AT TIME WHEN GOJ INFORMS THE PARTICULAR EMBASSY PROVIDING THE DIPLOMATIC NOTE THAT THE REFUGEES TEMPORARILY ADMITTED ARE NOT PERMITTED RESETTLEMENT IN A THIRD COUNTRY. TO DATE GOJ HAS NOT EXERCISED THIS OPTION AND IT SHOULD BE POINTED OUT THAT REFUGEES HERE HAVE IN FACT ENJOYED DE FACTO INDEFINITE STAY UNDER RATHER COMFORTABLE CONDITIONS.

4. PROCESSING OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES IN JAPAN HAS BEEN REASONABLY FAST. IN VIEW OF RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBERS INVOLVED AND THE CONSIDERATIONS DESCRIBED ABOVE, QUESTIONS CONTAINED IN PARA. 8 REFTEL (A) ARE NOT GENERALLY APPLICABLE TO JAPAN.
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PAGE 03 TOKYO 16036 060659Z

5. EMBOFFS IN ADDITION TO EXPLOITING EVERY CHANCE TO URGE OR PERSUADE GOJ TO PROVIDE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR INDOCHINESE REFUGEES, HAVE ALSO COUPLED THESE EFFORTS WITH EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE TO GOJ FOR PROVIDING TEMPORARY HAVEN TO THE REFUGEES WHO DO COME TO JAPAN, FOR HOUSING THEM UNDER GOOD LIVING CONDITIONS, FOR THUS FAR NOT PLACING ANY TIME LIMITATION ON THEIR STAY (OTHER THAN THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY EVENTUALLY WILL LEAVE JAPAN), AND FOR THEIR RELATIVELY GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNHCR FUND (I.E. THEY RANK FOURTH IN THE WORLD AFTER US, FRG, AND AUSTRALIA). MANSFIELD

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